

**UTAH DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP MEETING**

February 2, 2009

Present: Nori Huntsman, Chair; Sandi Errigo, Clay Cawley, Norma Bench, Ann Stevenson, Ken Halterman, Alice Halterman, Lacee A. Harris, Molly Prince, Lisa Fine, Roy Droddy, Wayne Russell, Susan Russell, Elise Hill

Special Guest: Captain Clay Cawley

Welcome: Nori Huntsman

Minutes of Last Meeting: Approved

Deputy Director Nori Huntsman excused Director Craig Burr and introduced herself to the group. She presented Capt. Clay Cawley and turned the meeting over to him for his presentation on the YPREP program. YPREP is an acronym for “Your Parole Requires Extensive Preparation.” It is a program born out of the Women’s Summit, intended to create a one-stop resource to provide services to female offenders in preparation for their re-entry into the community. Wrap-around services include housing, employment, transportation, childcare, etc.

In the Timpanogos housing unit, a professional setting has been created where volunteer providers can make presentations to inmates and accustom them to the atmosphere of the business world. Big Brothers and Big Sisters is a provider that makes mentors available to the children of offenders. Vocational rehabilitation is also a participant that sets up appointments with inmates even before they are released so the transition to assistance is smooth and stress free. Once a month, agents from AP&P hold a class designed to prepare the women for what to expect after their release. Volunteers of America and a single mother’s foundation also participate to help inform inmates how to gain funding for education and how to get in touch with credit organizations. Once an offender has been released and receives an income from employment on the outside, the foundation will match \$3 for every \$1 saved by the inmate toward a major asset such as a home, further education or business opportunity. An offender must have an income after release in order to qualify for participation in the program.

The Department of Workforce also visits the prison once a month to advise inmates of tax credits they may be able to take advantage of, as well as addressing many other needs the women have.

“Bridges Out of Poverty” is a program that teaches simple business principles. The reality is that an offender will probably not have a lucrative income immediately after release. This program teaches what realistic expectations they might anticipate in the business world, i.e. you will begin with a low-paying job and will slowly work up the rungs of the ladder, being patient and obtaining all the additional skills you can, in order

to build your employability and prepare for higher paying jobs. This might include taking some college or trade courses. Some businesses may qualify to receive a \$2,400 tax credit for hiring an ex-felon.

None of the providers who are currently participating in the prison's YPREP program are reimbursed for their services. It is done strictly on a volunteer basis. It is of utmost importance that inmates realize what a valuable resource YPREP is to them. Some providers have become discouraged because of low attendance at their presentations on the part of offenders and have considered withdrawing their volunteer services. It is imperative that inmates who commit to YPREP continue to attend all classes until the program has been completed. For anyone interested in finding out what providers are currently participating in the YPREP program, the information is listed online at <http://corrections.utah.gov/contenthome/gettingout.asp>.

Norma Bench suggested the prison explore the possibility of using the assistance of the LDS church, which offers help with creating a resume, interviewing techniques, how to dress for an interview, and other helpful tips on job seeking. Capt. Cawley said he would look into this further.

Roy Drodgy asked why inmates who have a year or less left until release are sent to county jails where they are unable to take advantage of the YPREP program when that is the time it is needed. Deputy Director Huntsman explained that the program is in its infancy, and bed space and funding are factors that play a part. The Department is working toward making the program as available as possible to all inmates, eventually extending it to the men as well.

The question about whether offenders were receiving help in obtaining social security cards and driver licenses before release was again brought up. The prison has no authority to issue these documents, but property is now holding them for inmates until their release. We provide the inmate with an ID form that has his/her picture on it.

With respect to job seeking after release, the question was asked if we are keeping a record for each offender of the classes and job training they have had while incarcerated that they could take to a potential employer. Deputy Director Huntsman said we maintain some records for their offender management (case) plan, but are encouraging inmates to do that for themselves. The new offender folder will be a tool that will contain some of that information, such as their case plan, classes, hearing information, etc. The folder will follow the inmate the entire time he/she is incarcerated and will go with them upon release. The suggestion was made that there be collaboration between YPREP and the offender folder to make a more complete and useful tool. The April FOCUS meeting will include an Offender Folder presentation so the group can see how an inmate can be proactive in his/her programming.

UDC supervises individuals in prisons, jails and communities statewide. As of 2-2-09 (changes daily) we supervise the following:

DIO Inmates = 6511 (Draper 3778, CUCF 1355, Other 1378)
AP&P Offenders = 16903 All, 3808 Parole, 11433 Probation, 1535 Unsentenced,
127 other.

Lacey A. Harris asked about statistics kept on our minority offenders. We will review our statistics and share them at the next meeting.

Roy Drodody introduced two of his colleagues at Prison Watch International and presented a handout detailing PWI's most recent project. Drodody reports PWI has purchased the Fun Dome building with the intention of making it into a 29 acre, multi-million dollar, multi-faceted enterprise that will meet the wide-ranging needs of prisoners, parolees, their families and underserved youth and adults of the surrounding community (see attachment).

Deputy Director Huntsman encouraged members of the group to visit the Department's newly designed website, www.corrections.utah.gov, and provide feedback at our next meeting on whether it is more user friendly. She then fielded miscellaneous questions from the group until the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Questions asked (and responses provided *after the meeting via these minutes*):

Can an offender be released to parole from a county jail? What are the limitations?
Per Inmate Placement Program Director Glenn Ercanbrack, it depends on the specific jail, if the offender is a resident of that community or close to it, etc. It must be requested by the inmate, their sponsor must pick them up at the jail upon release and the jail administration must agree to it.

How does an inmate receive release preparation while in a jail? Does a social worker or does the inmate placement program (IPP) do it?
Director Ercanbrack confirmed IPP handles pre-release issues with county jail state prison inmates.

If an offender doesn't have a social security card when s/he is released from prison, what does UDC do to help them obtain one or start the paperwork for one?
Inmate Parole Administrator Wendy Horlacher reports as of December, the social security administration does not accept UDCs identity documentation to provide new social security cards for offenders. We do provide information to the offenders on how to obtain social security cards. A website of interest is <http://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/>.

Release handbooks prepared by a private prisoner assistance group have not been allowed into county jails. Why?
The group leader reports they are copies of books previously provided by IPP. IPP Director Glenn Ercanbrack reports different jails reject it because of the binding on the books. The jails won't accept hard plastic binding. Some of the jails have rebound one copy of the book and placed it in their inmate libraries.

Have the laws changed on how interest on restitution is calculated? If so, how have they changed?

There has been no change to the code per Brian Allgaier, our administrative services manager in finance. You can review the legislation at http://le.utah.gov/~code/TITLE77/77_38a.htm.

Concern was expressed by the parents of an offender that the BOPP does not follow matrix recommendations.

FOCUS is not a BOPP forum.

Is NUCCC being closed?

There has been no announcement of this center being closed. It continues to operate in Ogden per Adult Probation & Parole Deputy Director Geri Miller.

Next Meeting:

The next FOCUS meeting will be held Monday, April 6 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Region III Adult Probation & Parole office, 36 West Fremont Ave. (1100 South), Salt Lake City, Utah.

Agenda for April 6 meeting: Offender Folder Presentation and Minority Statistics)